F/A-18A/B/C/D Hornet Upgrade

Description

The F/A-18 Hornet is a twin-engine, supersonic, strike-fighter aircraft. It fulfills both the air-to-air and air-to-ground mission requirements and can operate from conventional airfields and aircraft carriers. The F/A-18Cs delivered since FY90 have increased night and marginal weather capability, including a color moving map display, night vision goggle-compatible lighting and a navigation forward-looking infrared (NAVFLIR) sensor. The two-seat version, F/A-18D, incorporates all warfighting capabilities of the F/A-18C and includes a tactical reconnaissance capability. This aerial reconnaissance capability, Advanced Tactical Air Reconnaissance System (ATARS), provides near real-time aerial imagery to the MAGTF and began deployments with four systems per VMFA (AW) squadron in FY00.

Operational Impact

The F/A-18C provides modern multi-mission offensive and defensive anti-air capability and offensive air support. The F/A-18D provides the MAGTF with a platform capable of tactical air control and reconnaissance while retaining the capabilities of the F/A-18C. Both aircraft provide powerful and flexible air support and suppression of enemy air defenses. The maintainability and multi-mission capabilities of the F/A-18 make it well suited to the needs of the MAGTF in an austere expeditionary environment.

Program Status

The Marine Corps has initiated the upgrade of 46 F/A-18As (with a program objective of 76) to Lot XVII F/A-18C aircraft capability as well as digital communications and tactical data link. The Marine Corps anticipates programmed upgrades to enhance the current capabilities of the F/A-18C/D with digital communications, tactical data link, and tactical reconnaissance systems. This ensures that our F/A-18s remain viable and relevant until replaced by the STOVL Joint Strike Fighter (JSF).

Procurement Profile:	***FY02***	***FY03***
Quantity:	0	0

Developer/Manufacturer	The Boeing Company Northrop Grumman Hughes